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SENATOR BIRKHOLZ APPLAUDS RESTORATION OF TRANSPORTATION FUNDING

Thursday, May 1, 2003 - Senator Patricia Birkholz, R-Saugatuck Township, today announced her support for "Priority First!", a program which restores funding for 34 key road projects in Michigan. The "Priority First!" project will allow local communities to continue critical road projects which Governor Jennifer Granholm has "deferred".

"Local communities across the state have been counting on these projects to enhance their economic growth future and address transportation needs that exist today," Senator Birkholz said. "We cannot pull the rug out from under their feet after their studying and planning."

"Priorities First!" seeks to restore the funding for projects which were part of a long term plan to upgrade Michigan's transportation infrastructure. These projects have met and passed objective tests on their merits. Gov. Granholm's surprising announcement to "defer" these programs and re-direct monies to the city of Detroit has provoked an outrage. Local governments and citizens who were planning on these improvements saw the rug pulled out from underneath them by the Granholm administration. Her initiative takes money from the growth areas of the state and funnels it into less needed and less critical repairs for Detroit.

"I realize we are in tough economic times we cannot just drop the ball and stop planning for the future," Birkholz said. "Moving these projects toward will only help build Michigan a stronger future."

"Priorities First!" sets a sharp contrast between the Senate plan for the future of economic development in Michigan and the Governor's short-sighted, unidentified plan.

**Editor Note: Audio comments from Senator Birkholz can be heard at
www.senate.michigan.gov/gop/audiowire**